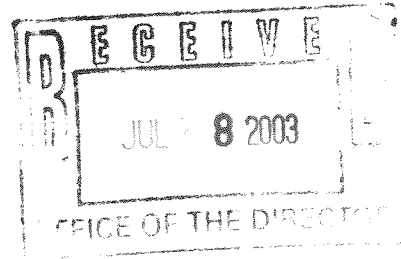


arizona municipal water users association

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July 3, 2003



Herb Guenther
Director
Arizona Department of Water Resources
500 N. 3rd Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

Dear Mr. Guenther:

At the June 25 meeting of the Governor's Drought Response Task Force, DWR staff briefly described the process that will be implemented to elicit participation by the interested parties in the State who will be directly affected by the eventual recommendations of the Task Force insofar as the long-term drought management plan is concerned. Municipal water providers have a direct "stake" in the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations, and I am concerned about the public participation process described by DWR staff.

As I understand the process, coined "Web-based planning", interested parties are expected to log onto the Task Force Internet site, review documents which are going to be posted on the site, and then submit their comments directly to DWR via electronic mail, or, presumably, through a contact link on the site. It is unclear if any interested party would have access to any original comments. This process was justified in an effort to avoid a surfeit of meetings, particularly in a Task Force that is examining issues with statewide implications, and it may be especially difficult for parties located outside of the Phoenix area to travel to Phoenix to attend meetings. In fact, we are led to the conclusion that no meetings at all, with the exception of the Task Force meetings, are being contemplated.

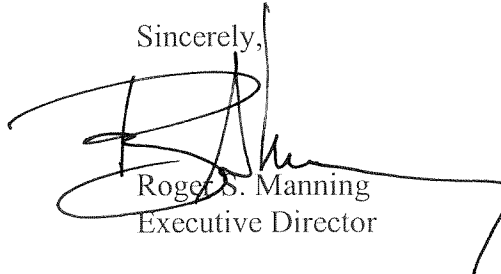
I can certainly appreciate the difficulty of constant travel to and from Phoenix. In the best of circumstances, a full working day is forfeit for the sake of a two or three hour meeting. However, the value of a meeting is that the give-and-take, which is usually a part of this kind of situation, allows participants to pose questions, answer questions, and modify their opinion on an issue as ideas are discussed. This kind of dynamic is lost through the Web-based planning process, where it is possible for others' ideas to be filtered through the internal DWR process.

Web-based planning is certainly participatory, and it probably provides many persons from across the State with the ability to participate in a planning process that may have been logistically closed to them in the past. However, Web-based planning is not collaborative. Future acceptance by the local entities, including municipal water providers, of the recommendations of the Task Force deliberations can only be assured if the local entities, who will be most affected by the recommendations, feel that they have had the on-going opportunity

to participate in a collaborative process and, consequently, helped shape and form the Task Force's final work product.

I urge DWR to reexamine its position on this issue, and develop a more open, collaborative process, with Web-based planning as a part.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger S. Manning', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger S. Manning
Executive Director

cc: Tom Buschatzke, Phoenix
Erik Dial, Peoria
Eric Kamienski, Tempe
Mike Lacey, Fluid Solutions
Beth Miller, Scottsdale
Colette Moore, Mesa
Kathy Rall, Gilbert
Steve Rot, Glendale
Dennis Rule, Tucson
John Sullivan, Salt River Project
Doug Toy, Chandler

VCD:bkt
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